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Neglected Arabia



Sheikh Esa Bin Ali of Bahrain and his Son, the Heir Apparent.

The Sheikh of Bahrain is practically in independent control of the Bahrain Islands, with a population of about 70,000. He receives customs and levies taxes and wields an influence in the Hinterland adjoining the Islands. He has maintained friendly relations with our missionaries from the time when Dr. Zwemer first made his home in Bahrain.



HARBOR OF MASKAT—*The first of our Arabian Stations visited by Dr. Chamberlain*

NEGLECTED ARABIA

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The Arabian Mission

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Neglected Arabia

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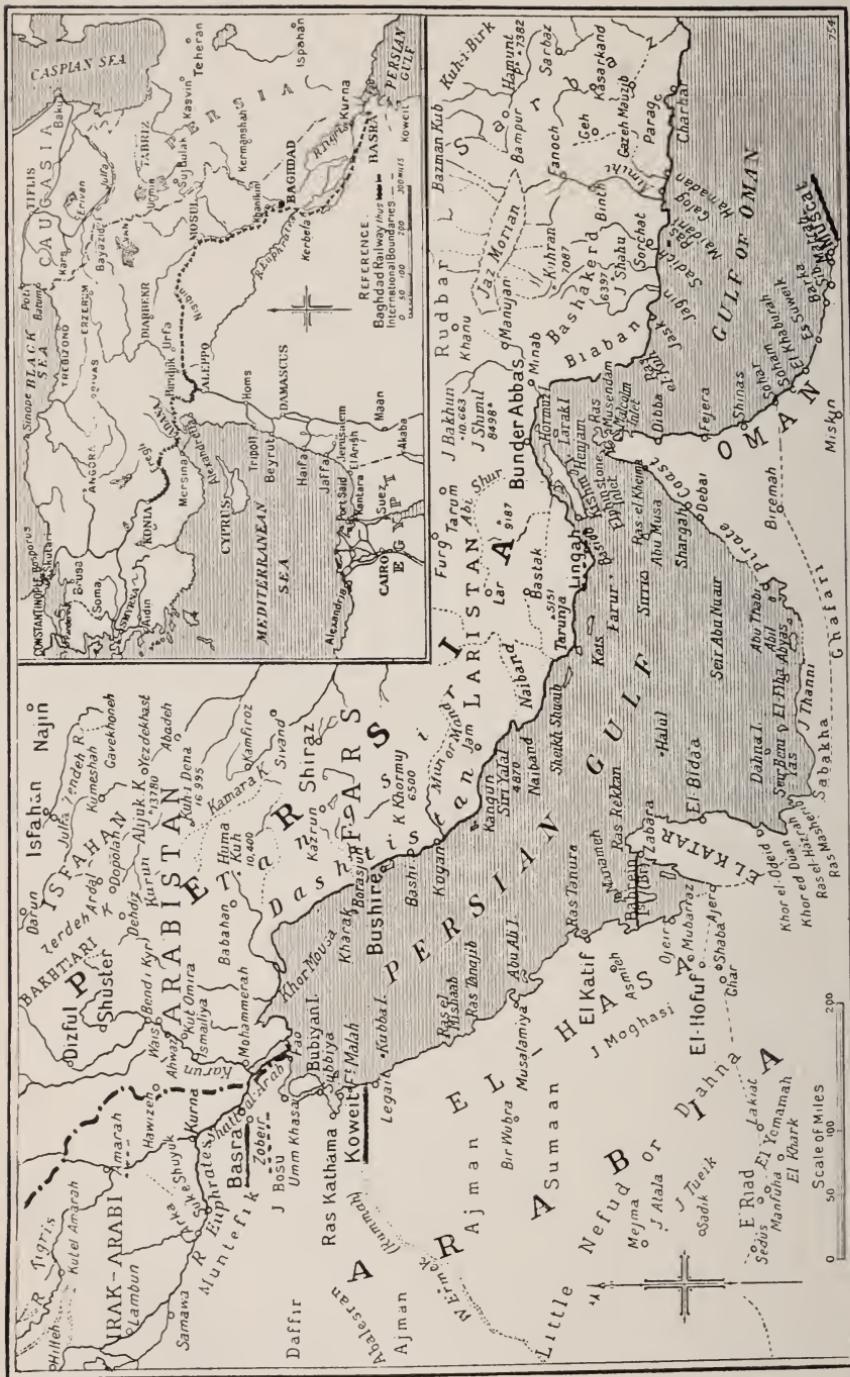
A Tour in the Persian Gulf

By REV. W. I. CHAMBERLAIN

To anyone interested in world affairs and in their historic relationships, a trip at any time in the Persian Gulf and through the lands bordering upon its waters, associated with events of such great antiquity, would be of profound interest. But to one alive to the events of recent years and acquainted with the work of those who have been dwelling among them, such a trip through these historic waters and to their great port cities would be of especial and absorbing interest in the year 1916, when the wide reaching influences and effects of the European War had led to the inclusion of the Gulf within the area of the world conflict. Such was my experience during the months of April and May of 1916, when it was my good fortune to be able to cruise over the waters and visit the cities of the Persian Gulf.

One of the immediate effects of the appearance of Turkey as a combatant in the great war was to extend its area to the Persian Gulf. Hostilities quickly began between the Turks and a force of British and Indian troops at the head of the Gulf. In a short time the British had captured the important port of Basrah, the largest center of our Arabian Mission's activities, and had gained possession of the delta of the Tigris and the Euphrates, to which territory the Arabian Mission has long desired to gain free and untrammeled access. The country round Basrah was thus the scene of the first operations of the Mesopotamian and Gulf Campaign, but the local issues which lay at its back affected the whole Persian Gulf. When the Turkish and British forces fought before Basrah they were contending for domination in the Gulf and the lure which lay behind was that of a short road to India.

It is not perhaps generally realized that the British were in the Gulf before the Turks. The first time British arms were carried to victory in the Persian Gulf was in 1622, about the time when our forefathers landed on Plymouth Rock. A British force laid siege to a Portuguese fort on the Island of Kishm which, together with the peninsula extending from Oman, constitutes the gateway to the Persian Gulf. Shortly afterward the British, fighting in alliance with a Persian army, seized the Portuguese city and island of Hormuz, opposite to Kishm. It was at this time that the British made a treaty with Persia by which they undertook "to keep two men-of-war constantly to defend the Gulf." The number of warships was afterward increased to five, and from that time onward British seamen policed and protected the Gulf and their power and influence were never seriously disputed.



THE PERSIAN GULF AND ITS SHORES—OUR MAIN STATIONS ARE HEAVILY UNDERLINED—OUT-STATIONS ARE INDICATED BY A DOTTED LINE—THE INSET SHOWS BAGDAD NOW OCCUPIED BY THE BRITISH AND THE PROJECTED RAILROAD

The Turkish power emerged upon the Gulf somewhat later. The Ottoman course of empire long lay westward. From the time when Ertoghrul and his band of four hundred horsemen charged the Mongol army near Angora in the thirteenth century and thus took the first step which led to the foundation of the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman Turk always looked toward the setting rather than the rising sun. Their roots were planted deep in Asia, but it was the lure of European conquest which constantly led them onward until the tide was stayed at the very gates of Vienna in 1529. Nevertheless they did not neglect to extend their dominions in Asia and Africa. They conquered Egypt early in the sixteenth century, and in the same century Sheikh Suleiman, the Magnificent, effected the first Turkish capture of Bagdad. He was driven from the city by the Persians, and it was not until 1638 that Sheikh Murad IV appeared before Bagdad with an immense army, recovered it and hoisted the Turkish flag. Thirty years later, in 1668, or forty-six years after the British had established themselves at the very end of the Gulf, the Turks marched down to Basrah, captured it and came for the first time to the shores of the Persian Gulf.

The city and port of Basrah have been famous in the East for centuries. The port was originally created by the Caliph Omar in 638 A.D., on a site some miles from its present position. In the days of the Bagdad Caliphate it was a great emporium of trade and commerce, and from Basrah Sinbad the sailor, who was more than a mythical personage, sailed on his memorable and highly colored voyages. The Turks soon brought about the decay of the port, after they captured it in 1668. In modern times its prosperity has greatly revived, largely through the date trade, of which it is the central port. The export trade of Basrah reached a total volume of approximately \$16,000,000 in 1912. The imports in the same year amounted to a total of \$13,000,000.

Basrah derives its attractiveness, such as it possesses, from its setting of palm trees, its gardens, and its numerous intersecting canals, although these same canals are a constant source of fever. The population is probably about 60,000. It is a curiously mixed community, including many Jews and Armenians. The Turks are few, consisting mainly of government officials and the garrison. The Turk has been overlord of the Euphrates delta, but his race never sought to settle there.

For many years the Indian Government has been represented in the Persian Gulf by Sir Percy Cox, who has been British Resident and Consul General. Though little known outside of India and the Gulf, he has filled a distinguished and honorable place in the more recent chapters of Great Britain in the Middle East. He is at once soldier and diplomat, but peacemaker most of all. For years he has held the Persian Gulf, as it were, in the hollow of his hand. There was hardly a Sheikh upon its shores who did not both fear and respect him, and above all repose entire confidence in his justice and impartiality. He has been a court of appeal in their quarrels and he has composed their differences with firmness and fairness.



COLONEL SIR PERCY COX, K. C. S. I.
British Resident and Consul-General in the Persian Gulf.

He began his career at Muscat in 1889 and there laid the foundations of a friendship with Dr. Cantine which has remained and grown through the intervening years. During these years Sir Percy Cox has also formed friendships with our other missionaries who have resided in the various port cities of the Gulf in which he has successively represented the Government. Patience, tact, vigilance and a capacity for laborious work have been the secret of his years of toil. Never afraid of responsibility, but endowed with unfailing restraint and caution, he has been a striking figure in the long line of India's soldier-politicians who have served Great Britain in the Gulf and India.

Armed with a communication from this influential officer of the Government, secured through the good offices of Dr. Bennett, I was able to secure the very necessary official permits before starting from Bombay on my visit to the Gulf last April. These included the appropriate documents from the military, medical, police and civil officers of Bombay, the port of departure, the military and civil officers of Basrah, the port of destination, and a statement certifying to my American citizenship from the American Consul at Bombay.

In view of the uncertainties of transportation and the dangers involved in the war areas, it was thought best that the other members of the Board's Deputation, who had been visiting with me the Missions in Japan, China and India, should not undertake this visit to the Persian Gulf.

On the evening of Friday, March 31st, I sailed from Bombay in the British India turbine steamer "Lhasa." On the morning of April 2nd we entered the harbor of Karachi, the capital of the Province of Sindh, which has grown greatly in recent years as a naval port and as a natural point of communication with the new capital of India established at Delhi. The long line of piers and warehouses, splendidly constructed, the fine business houses along the main street of Karachi, all greatly impressed me with the growing importance of this city and port. In the evening of this day the passengers for the Gulf transshipped to the S. S. "Dwarka," a small and most uncomfortable boat, but swift withal, and intended for the purposes of rapid mail communication between Karachi and Basrah. During the

following day we sailed across the Gulf of Oman, reaching Maskat in the afternoon of April 4th. The steamer makes a very brief call at Maskat, only long enough to leave the mails and communicate with the Political Officer. On casting anchor in this harbor, we were greeted by Rev. F. J. Barny and Dr. Hosmon, who came alongside in a little Arab boat. Although the time was very limited, I insisted upon going on shore to see what might be possible. In the brief space of an hour and a half we visited the two mission residences, the Dispensary, the Chapel, the School, the latter a large room in one of the mission residences, and the Bible Shop in the town. The garden spot, which Mr. Barny, with great persistence, had cultivated in a corner of the small mission compound, was the most, and perhaps the only, attractive material thing that I saw in Maskat. Encircled by rocky, barren hills, the town itself is made up of houses of brick and white plaster. Certainly no one would choose Maskat as an attractive place of residence, and yet our missionaries are living and laboring here with a courage and with a cheerfulness which was to me very impressive.

Sailing from Maskat we were able to see, three miles off, the town of Matrah, the home of Dr. Thoms and the place of his tragic death. I also had an opportunity to visit the cove where lie buried Bishop French and some of our missionaries who have died in the midst of their labors.

After passing Ras Musendam, the extended peninsula beyond the Pirate Coast, we entered the Persian Gulf proper, calling at Henjam Island to leave passengers and mail for Bunder Abbas, the large Persian town on the Southeast coast of the Gulf. During the next few days we sailed due north, passing Bahrein and Kuweit, as this mail steamer did not call at these ports. Our next port of call was Bushire on the Persian Coast. Here we came upon a large British war vessel, the flagship of the senior



THE ASSHAR CREEK AT BASRAH.

The Lansing Memorial Hospital is located in the grove in the background.

Naval Officer of the Gulf, and other vessels of the Navy doing duty in the Gulf. While we were leaving the harbor of Maskat a great British war vessel had come in and had anchored, having just arrived from the Mediterranean and having on board an Admiral of the British Navy.

On the morning of April 7th we found ourselves fast upon the bar at the entrance of Shatt-al-Arab, the great river formed by the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. Passing up the river lined with miles of date palms and obstructed at one point by the sunken Hamburg-American steamer "Ecbatana," sunk by the Turks across the channel of the river in the hope of preventing the progress of the British Expedition northward toward Basrah, we found ourselves at seven o'clock in the evening before Basrah. This was indeed a busy harbor. No less than fifty vessels of various descriptions, most of them connected with the British Military Expedition, were anchored in the harbor. Here I was greeted by Rev. and Mrs. John Van Ess and Dr. Mylrea, the last having arrived on the private yacht of the Sheikh of Kuweit, which had been kindly loaned for the purpose of taking us to Kuweit, all the regular means of connecting with this station and Basrah having been withdrawn for transport service.

Through the kind offices of Dr. Mylrea and Mr. Van Ess and their friendly relations with the Political and Naval Officers, Sir Percy Cox made provision for Dr. Mylrea and me on a Sloop of War which did duty in the Gulf. He endeavored to secure for use his own vessel H.M.S. "Lawrence," a sidewheeler sloop of war designed to do duty in the Gulf and over the shallow stretches of the rivers in which the Turkish Government had not made channels. This vessel not being at that time obtainable the Senior Naval officer had, with great consideration, invited Dr. Mylrea and me to travel on board another sloop of war then available, H.M.S. "Clio."



H.M.S. "CLIO" LYING IN THE RIVER OFF BASRAH.

Without remaining longer at this time at Basrah, Dr. Mylrea and I returned to Bushire on the mail steamer on which we had come up the Gulf. Here we were transferred to the war vessel and for ten days enjoyed the hospitality of its Captain Arthur W. Lewis, a fine type of the class of English sailors who have brought so much honor to England on every ocean and on every sea. For several days we sailed down the Persian Coast of the Gulf, discovering conditions along this coast which gave us valuable information, especially in view of the proposal that our sister Reformed Church take up work among the followers of Islam in this area of the Moslem world.



THE FORESHORE AT BAHREIN ISLAND.

On the morning of April 14th we arrived in the harbor of the Bahrein Islands. We were not expected, as there was no communication by mail or telegraph that could reach this little spot after our plans had developed in this unexpected manner. The Captain sent us on shore in his boat and Dr. Mylrea and I walked unannounced into the missionary home at Bahrein where Mr. and Mrs. Dykstra and Miss Kellien were seated at the breakfast table. Here we spent three most deeply interesting and profitable days visiting the houses where our missionaries had first resided and where they had carried on their medical and evangelistic work, especially the house which for many years had sheltered several families together and had given hospitality ten years ago to the previous Deputation of the Board consisting of Dr. Cobb, Dr. and Mrs. Hutton and Mrs. Olcott. We called upon the Sheikh of Bahrein, who resided with the aristocracy of Moharrek on one of the Islands of the group. It was a deeply interesting experience to find myself at the station where the work of our missionaries had first developed in an institutional way and where Dr. and Mrs. Zwemer so long lived and labored. I will not here record the details of my visit to the separate stations as I understand they are to form the subject of articles which are to appear in Neglected Arabia.



A VIEW OVER KUWEIT, WHICH LIES BETWEEN THE DESERT AND THE SEA.

From Bahrein we sailed northward along the Arabian Coast reaching Kuweit on the morning of April 18th. This is a large deep water harbor, probably the best in the entire Gulf. We arrived on a day following one of the severest wind and rain storms in the recent history of Kuweit. This had done much damage to our new Mission residences and Hospital, but the shelter which these residences furnished our missionaries was such as to leave a deep impression of satisfaction, especially after seeing the insanitary and uncomfortable Arab houses in which they had made their homes for years, awaiting the funds and the building of these residences. The new Hospital at Kuweit is indeed a gem and its operating room well nigh perfect in construction, arrangement and equipment. The days spent here with Dr. and Mrs. Mylrea and Miss Schafheitlin were of absorbing interest and I would gladly dwell upon them were it not for the limitations upon me and the fuller statements which Dr. Mylrea has made.



THE HOSPITAL AND THE PHYSICIAN'S RESIDENCE JUST OUTSIDE KUWEIT.

Here the companion of many days left me. The fellowship of Dr. Mylrea, the abundance of his information, his acquaintance with influential Arabs as well as British officers made the week's cruise with him one of great pleasure not easily to be forgotten. By the courtesy of the Senior Naval Officer and the Captain, the H.M.S. "Clio" did not return directly to its quarters at Bushire, but sailed again northward and eastward to the Shatt-al-Arab and arrived at Basrah on the evening of April 21st. Here I was greeted by Rev. and Mrs. Van Ess and Dr. Van Vlack, who had in the meantime arrived from Bahrein to take charge of the Lansing Memorial Hospital. A memorable week was spent here at Basrah as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Van Ess. Each day was filled with opportunities for coming into closer acquaintance with the work of our missionaries and with their lives. The educational, the medical and the evangelistic work, the institutions with which the Mission work was maintained, the people for whom they were established, were all made real to me by visits and by prolonged conversations. We went out into the desert as far as Zobeir. We visited the battle field in the neighborhood of Basrah. We went into the long extended military camps, we sailed up and down the river and into the entrance to the Tigris, and altogether accumulated an experience which has made a deep impression upon my mind and heart. Here I found Dr. Bennett recovering from his serious illness and with truly Christian fortitude accepting the will of God in the deep affliction that had come upon him in the death of Mrs. Bennett, whose useful life had, in its turn, made a profound impression upon the entire community, both Arab and British.



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR ARTHUR BARRETT, K.C.B.
Commander of the British Expeditionary Force.
He gave 40,000 rupees to the Lansing Memorial Hospital at Basrah.
on the arrival of the expedition.

On the evening of Sunday, April 30th, I sailed away from Basrah and had an opportunity during the succeeding five days of dwelling upon these weeks in the Persian Gulf, constituting in many ways, which cannot all be here set down, one of the most unique if not also the most impressive experiences of my life.

Medical Practice in Arabia

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The following characteristic note accompanied this article by Dr. Paul W. Harrison.

S. S. Inaba Maru, Dec. 12, 1916.

Dear Dr. Miller:—I am enclosing a yarn or two for Neglected Arabia. I need not add that you are at liberty to use as much or as little as you wish or none at all. We are just entering Yokohama as I write. A rough voyage. In fact the roughest I have ever experienced, but today is a good day, and Mrs. Harrison and I have been having a good time in spite of it all. I have nothing to add as to when I hope to see Arabia, though naturally, as soon as I can see Ruigh I shall hope to know more, and to be writing again.

All sorts of good wishes, for yourself, and for the work. Give my regards to all in the office, especially to Dr. Chamberlain and Mr. Bennet.

Yours,

P. W. HARRISON.

The Doctor in Arabia learns a good deal of the Philosophy of the Arab, himself, and decides that he too cannot always escape what is written on his forehead. One morning I was peacefully sleeping in the Hospital yard in Kuweit. There were many reasons why I did not sleep inside in those days. The only room that I had was also my office, and it was so full of these little reasons that one evening when I went to bed, I picked twenty-three of them out of my trousers, before I turned in. The rest I left, for I did not have time to capture or chase away any more fleas that night. So in those days I slept out in the yard to the great scandal of the entire community who feared for my sanity.

A short night's rest was written on my forehead, for that night. At about three in the morning more or less, I was awakened by someone pulling at my sleeve. I woke with somewhat of a start, imagining that possibly someone had been murdered, for night calls are rare in that country, and usually not without some very grave reason. An old Bedouin woman was looking down at me, one of the class that sees more of the hard things of this world, and less of its amenities, than perhaps any other people on earth. "Yes," I said. "What is the trouble?" "Wake up, Sahib," she said. "Wake up, I want some medicine." I was awaking with some speed, now, and I asked with more intelligence, "Yes, what sort of medicine do you need, what is the matter?" "I have," she said, "a pain in my shoulder." I was somewhat surprised because I had expected something more of the order of an emergency, so I continued my inquiries. "How long have you had it?" "About six years, now," she said, "and I have come twenty days' journey to get to you and to this Hospital of which I have heard so much." "Well," I said, "we are very glad indeed to see you, but the medicines are locked up at this hour, do you suppose that you could come at about eight o'clock? It will be a little easier for me to get the medicine for you then. There is plenty of it. You are not leaving before that time are you?" "O no, we have just arrived, and I came at once to see you. I will come at any time you wish." So she went away happy, and was on hand promptly at eight, to get her medicine. It was a splendid demonstration of the simplicity and the directness of their mental processes, and a good opportunity to make a friend that I doubt not remembers me now much better than I do her.

One day in Inland Oman, a diminutive small boy led in an old fisherman at the end of a short pole. "I cannot see as well as I used to," said the grizzled old man. "Can you do anything for my eyes?" I examined them, they were clean eyes. Ideal cataracts for operation, in both of them. "Nothing will do you any good except an operation," I said. "I am sorry but medicine offers you nothing." "Well, but will operation do me any good?" "Yes," I replied. "After the operation you will not see like a little child, but you should see enough to read coarse print if you are willing to wear glasses." "But I cannot read," said the old patriarch. "Well in that case you cannot read coarse print after the operation, but you should see a good deal. It is well worth your while." "Will you do it here?" he asked. "No, go home now, and if you will send your boy at three this afternoon, I will come and do it in your own house."

So at three the boy came, and as everything was ready, we went over and for special reasons extracted the cataract from each eye. "Now," I said, after this rather ticklish job was over, and with an emphasis almost violent, "you lie still till I come and see you to-morrow. Don't even get up to get a drink. Your neighbors (only a few feet away) will come and do anything for you that you need, any time that you call them. Even if the roof of your little hut should burn down over your head you are to lie still. Understand?" and I repeated it several times, and went away. I heard nothing from him, so the next day at about the same time I went to see him. From a distance I saw some one sitting in his door, and I supposed that some one of his cronies had come over to relieve the tedium of the day by conversation. I had never seen the man till the day before, and did not realize until I was almost over him that this man sitting in this doorway, cheerfully working at something or other was the same man that I had operated on the day before. The same and no other, and not a stitch of a bandage was to be seen on his head. Both eyes were wide open. My heart sank apparently nearly to my toes, but nothing was to be gained by getting excited. Less than twenty-four hours from the time of operation, and bandages off, eyes wide open, with no precautions whatever. I had visions of both eyes utterly ruined from infection, and the man worse off than before. "Here," I said. "What are you doing here? Didn't you understand that you were to lie still till I came? What are you doing?" "Oh," said the old man radiantly, "I can see better this morning than I have seen for years, and I am weaving a new fishnet." What can you say under such circumstances? We bandaged his eyes up again, put him to bed, and he recovered beautifully. The Arab philosopher has the best of it. A man cannot escape what is written on his forehead.

One day an unsophisticated old Bedouin came into the Hospital. He had a secret to tell me. "I have a Hernia," he whispered. "I have heard that you perform operations, here. Do you think you can fix it?" "Yes, I think so," I said, "whenever you wish to come in, we will do it." "But," whispered the cautious old man, "it is a big one." "Well, we can still fix it up," I said. "But I have got two of them, two big ones." "Well, come in anyway, and we can fix them both, I believe," I replied. So he came in. We operated on him that day, and he was greatly delighted, for we assured

him that if the Lord wills they would never come back, and he had not suffered a particle of pain in the operation. This he thought was wonderful work.

But we had no bed for the old man, so I hunted up a patient who was in the Hospital for some minor operation. "You must sleep on the floor after this," I told him. "We need your bed for this old man who has just had a serious operation." He had never slept on anything except the floor before in his life, I imagine, but he felt that his dignity was affronted, and he protested, "It is my bed and I was here first." I insisted however, so he lay on his bed which we made up for him on the floor, and we gave his bed to the old man who had just been operated on.

But that night after the Doctor was gone, the dispossessed man came to pay the new occupant of the bed a visit. "Where do you come from, and what did they do to you to-day?" "O," replied the man. "I had a Hernia, two in fact, two big ones, and they fixed them up to-day, and it did not hurt at all, and they say that they will never come back." "How fine," replied the other. "Did they tell you, too, what they are planning to do to you to-morrow?" "No," said the old man. "I was not aware that I was to have anything done to me to-morrow. What is it?" "You should have been told," said the visitor, "for you are an old man; can it be they have not told you?" "Indeed, I know nothing," said the Old Bedouin, "tell me quickly." "Why," said the man whose bed was now on the floor, "to-day they fixed your Hernia, and to-morrow they take out all your intestines, and the day after, they cut off both your legs, you are an old man. Are you sure you can stand it?" "Indeed I was told nothing," said the old man. "I have found it out just in time."

Early the next morning I went over to see the old man, perhaps at half-past six or at a quarter to seven. His bed was empty. "Where is the old man?" I asked with no small alarm. "He went home early this morning," said one of his companions. "He went home, who told him to go home?" "Nobody told him to go home. He just thought he would prefer to go." "Well, but was there any reason? Was he in great pain?" "Apparently not," said the man who occupied the bed next to his. "He complained of none." And nobody knew why he had gone home. That is nobody knew when I asked them. They feared what would happen to them if they told. And it was three months before I found out why he went home. But that afternoon the dispossessed man came to see me. "You took away my bed and gave it to that old Bedouin, yesterday." "Yes," I said, "I remember." "Well, he went home this morning, did he not? Can I have my bed back?" And in my ignorance he got it back. And the moral of this is that the Westerner is an easy man to sell a gold brick to, according to Eastern standards, and often gets laughed at, I doubt not, by them as they discuss the childlike Franks together. But the father of the Hernias did not die, for though I have never seen him since, I have heard from him, that he is still enjoying good health, and in the absence of any accompanying remarks about the Hernias it is safe to conclude that he enjoys a permanent cure.

Encouraging Evangelistic Work at Kuwait

By C. STANLEY G. MYLREA, M.D.



DR. MYLREA.

Direct evangelistic work in Kuwait, as in all our stations, is carried on along these principal lines of effort. The Sunday Services, the addresses by which the daily routine of the Hospital is commenced, the work of the Colporteurs, and finally the Bible Shop.

The Sunday Services have this year drawn large congregations, larger even than last year. While actual count has not been regularly kept, an average attendance of sixty persons is a fair estimate. The preacher has had an audience of over a hundred on many occasions. The services for the greater part of the year are held in the open air, in the courtyard of the house where our school work is carried on. The sound of the "baby organ" finding its way out into the street probably attracts a good many passers-by

but on the other hand it is well known all over the town that Sunday is our day and there is a fair number that attend regularly. The keeping of order is still a great difficulty and there have been Sundays when we have been much disturbed by rowdies who come in with no idea but to make trouble, stones and dirt have even been pitched over the wall from the street into the middle of the congregation. Then, too, as the time of the service corresponds with the dismissal hour of the neighboring schools we get large numbers of small boys who are like small boys all over the world, only more so. However, the congregations are steadily getting quieter and less irreverent and we look forward to perfection later on. Meanwhile the poor have the gospel preached to them. During December, January and February we had the privilege of Mr. Dykstra's assistance at the Sunday Services but during the remainder of the year the school teacher and the two colporteurs have taken charge in turn. They have all improved greatly and though they have their off Sundays with a correspondingly poor sermon, they have done very well indeed and hold their trying audiences exceedingly well. I think too that the very fact that they are known throughout the town as those who preach on Sundays gives them a certain standing and prestige among the people, which is not without its value. In addition they seem to enjoy preaching; it is certainly no hardship to them.

The Dispensary Services have like the Sunday Services been conducted by the school teacher and the colporteurs in turn while I myself have contributed some of the talks.

The Bible Shop, in charge of Colporteur Muallim Hanna, reports that the general attitude of the town is much less bigoted than last year. The sales are ahead of last year by some ninety portions, while one complete Arabic Bible was purchased by a Sheikh who is brother to the late Sheikh

Mubarek and uncle of the present Sheikh Jabr, the ruler of Kuwait. The Jews continue to be good buyers of the Old Testament, but can seldom be prevailed on to buy a New Testament; I think only four gospel portions have been sold to Jews during the entire year. Most of the sales to Arabs and Persians are gospel portions with an occasional book from the Old Testament such as The Psalms, or The Book of Job, or Genesis, or Exodus and once in a while The Proverbs of Solomon. There is absolute freedom of speech in the Shop and our men declare they can now say anything they like. There are three kinds of people who visit the Shop, firstly those who come merely to argue and show off their learning, secondly those who will talk on any subject except religion which they refuse to discuss, and thirdly there are those who really come to learn what our religion is. Something like the parable of the Sower. The arguers are easily in the majority. There are from fifteen to twenty regular frequenters of the Shop, outside of those who come to read the Arabic newspapers and to look at the war pictures in The Illustrated London News. The latter average about thirty a day. About two months ago as the Shop was being closed for the night, a Nejdi, an Arab from the great interior, accosted Hanna saying, "Why don't you come to the Nejd and teach us?" Hanna replied, "If we come, you will kill us." Yes! assented the Nejdi. "If you came we should probably kill you." "All right," said our man. "When you have become men instead of wild beasts, we will come." A few days ago another Nejdi came in; he was one of Sheikh Abd-el-Aziz bin Saud's men. Our colporteur asked him, "When will we be allowed to enter the Nejd?" He replied, "We have become brothers and whenever the Sheikh gives the formal permission to you to visit us you are welcome. There is no difference between us since our Sheikhs have called on yours (referring to the recent conference between the Chief British Political Officer of the Persian Gulf and the Sheikhs of Kuwait, Mohammerah, and Nejd). We see that the English Government is clean and straight and quite unlike the Turkish Government with its bribery and corruption." This man came to the Shop more than once and his speech was always along the same lines and obviously sincere. The difference in the attitude of these two Nejdies is instructive to one who is watching the trend of public opinion. The Wolf is becoming the Lamb. There is a brother of the present Sheikh who has always shown himself, to say the least, quite devoid of any sympathy with our persons or our work. If we met him on the street he would look the other way, but now as he passes the Shop he deigns to look toward us and acknowledge our salutations. Sheikh Jabr, the ruler of Kuwait has several times recently stopped in front of the Shop and chatted with the man in charge. Sales of educational and secular books have dropped almost to nothing owing to our inability to stock up. Beyrouth is our source of supply for this class of book and since the outbreak of the war we have been cut off from Beyrouth.

The colporteur, Michael by name, whose work is on the street, has also an encouraging report to bring in. His work in the Hospital takes up his mornings and this part of his duty has already been referred to in the Medical Report. He has sold a complete Persian Bible and also a New Testament to the leading Persian merchant of the town, and more important still he has sold a complete Arabic Bible to the son of the bigoted Sheikh I

mentioned above as one who was only just beginning to acknowledge our salutations. The young man, after buying his Bible, spent two hours with Michael, going over the titles and general subject matter of all the books of the Bible. Then a Persian Bible has been sold to one of the clerks in the office of the English firm here and an Arabic New Testament to a young merchant. Finally, one of our Arab school boys has recently bought an Arabic New Testament.

There is a small group of Hassawi tailors with whom Michael has become quite friendly, the main theme of discussion being Salvation through Christ. Three of these men have admitted that Christ is The Only Mediator, in addition to all the other things that all Moslems admit about Christ. Another point of discussion has been on the subject of praying for their prophet (no pious Moslem ever speaks of Mohammed without adding the words, "And on him be prayers and peace"). "If Mohammed be all that you claim for him, why does he need your prayers? We pray *to* our Prophet, not *for* him."

Out in the desert behind the town are always large numbers of Bedouin living in tents. These have been faithfully worked by Michael. Last year he could hardly gain admittance to a tent but this year he is welcome everywhere and none has ever said anything objectionable about him or his message in his hearing. On one occasion he was asked about prayer and so he simply stood up and prayed so that he might show them how Christians pray. They approved his prayer and expressed their surprise at the goodness of the Christian religion. The tribes in camp round Kuwait this year include the Um Tairis, Ajmans, Owazim, Rashaids, and Suleib. The latter, a tribe held in the greatest contempt by all other Arabs because of their reputed Christian origin, have proved to have at least one very interesting custom. On two occasions in connection with circumcision rites, Michael has seen in the door of a Sulibi tent, a small cross decorated with brightly colored ribbons. This custom, they say, has been handed down to them from their forefathers. One theory of their origin is that they sprang from the followers of the Crusading armies who did not return to Europe.

Michael has also tackled the Jews. "Why don't you accept Christ?" he asks, and they reply, "He has not yet come." And then Michael would dwell on the Old Testament prophecies and show how they point to (a) His first coming and (b) His second coming. He would insist that He came the first time to save the world and that He will come the second time to take His kingdom and judge the world, and would turn up chapter and verse as witness to his statements. They are never able to offer adequate explanations of the prophecies which relate to the wonderful birth and death of Christ, though they have dug up something from the Talmud which says that if Christ comes of the tribe of Ephraim he must die. They are emphatic on the point that if Christ come of the seed of David, He can never die. They all seem to expect the Messiah soon, and curiously enough base one theory on Daniel 12:12, "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." They say that these 1335 days are the length of the Moslem Era, though the reasons they

give for dating the coming of Christ from the Hejra are obscure and far-fetched. There are many Moslems in Kuwait who think we are now in the last days whatever they understand by the phrase, while some say that the day of resurrection is at hand and others again say that the days of Islam itself are nearly numbered.

The School cannot rank as a Direct Evangelistic Agency, but it is an indirect one of great value. The total number of names enrolled this year was thirty-nine, as against thirty-one last year. The numbers include six Jews and three Christians, so that there were thirty Moslems. The average age of the boys was about twelve and they were practically all drawn from the middle class; the Jews, four of whom were Persians, were all from fairly well-to-do families. Two of the Moslem pupils were Persians and the rest were all Arab. No fees have been asked for up to the present, but the innovation might be an advantage. There have been no appointed periods for religious exercises, but every day as opportunity offers short talks have been given on religion, temperance, etc. This system seems to give less offense to parents than stereotyped prayers. Two of the boys are always willing to discuss Christianity in a sober spirit, as for example, the difference between Christ and Mohammed. A persistent effort has been made to inculcate truthfulness; offenders in this respect are given the opportunity to confess their lie publicly and if they do so are pardoned, if not they are punished by being caned on the hand. I have already mentioned above in connection with Bible Sales that one of the boys has recently purchased a New Testament.

The big Moslem School is not as popular as formerly; the Egyptian head master was discharged some months ago on account of his rather modern ideas on geography and science and as a consequence most of the older pupils left the school. Many parents now say that after their children have been grounded in the Koran they want to send them to us. English, of course, is what they want and here is where we must do especially good work for if the Opposition School can secure the services of a good Moslem teacher of English, we shall not get the older boys above referred to. Such a Moslem teacher of English is, however, not an easy person to find; nearly all of them are bound to be open to the same objection which resulted in the dismissal of the last one, he will be too modern. The numbers of the Moslem School show a steady decline and they probably do not now number much over two hundred where last year they were some three hundred. I believe the school here has a future if it can be given the attention and equipment it deserves. At present the accommodation is fair though the rooms are small. The equipment is almost nil.

November, 1916.

Unexpected Fruit

BY REV. G. J. PENNINGS



MR. PENNINGS.

Mohammedan Mission fields are among the most difficult in which to work. Nowhere does the missionary have more need of the patience of unanswered prayer.

At times it seems to him as if all his efforts were fruitless. The chapel-sermons, the daily services in the clinic,

the personal conversations, the efforts of our colporteurs and their labors on the road, all seem like so much seed sown by the wayside, whence the birds carry it away.

How encouraging, therefore, to the missionary to discover that seed which he had long counted as lost has in some unexpected corner sprung up and brought forth

fruit unto life eternal. Of this the following is an example.

For some months we were fortunate to have at Bahrein a very zealous colporteur named Barakaat. He was especially strong in personal evangelism. But he left for Egypt a disappointed man; for all his efforts had seemingly been in vain. They had only served to arouse enmity and persecution. But now a letter from Dr. Zwemer tells me that as a result of Barakaat's efforts in Bahrein, he had baptized a most promising convert on the 21st of December, 1916. An Arabic letter from this convert to Dr. Zwemer was inclosed, and this I have translated for Neglected Arabia. It shows how loyal this new convert is to his new allegiance, and is an example of what a convert from Mohammedanism to Christianity must suffer for His name's sake.

"December 23, 1916.

"To my beloved father, Dr. Zwemer:

"After most respectful greetings, I wish to inform you that I am much pleased with my condition and the state of my affairs. I also promised to write you a letter, but it is not easy for me to write well, so that I beg your pardon. As to your request for a recital of my experiences, these are as follows:

"In my trip from Bahrein to Medina, I first went to Basrah, and from there to Amara. At this place I experienced very severe persecution, but because of God's protection, I overcame and escaped from their hands. Thereupon I went to Bagdad, where I remained for some time. But I had absolutely no money, so I left Bagdad and went to one of the gardens where I prayed with strong faith. I said, 'O Lord God, I am in need of fifteen pounds; I beseech in thy mercy to be gracious unto me for I am your son.' I thank Jesus because he hears the prayer of a poor man like me. Before I was aware of it, the owner of the garden came near, and asked me, 'From where are you?' So I told him. He took me to the house in the garden, and upon our arrival there he revealed to me that he was indeed a Christian. After this when I making ready to resume my journey afoot, this man

came to me and gave me fifteen pounds, saying, 'Do not find fault with me, for this is all I have with me, and I also ask for your prayers in my behalf.' With six pounds I hired a mule to ride on, and I also bought what I needed for the journey, so that I had about three and a half pounds left. We departed to the neighborhood of Haleb where we ate at the first stopping-place, and the second stopping-place was Felujah. After we left Felujah for Ramathie, a band of men so great that there was no limit to their numbers set upon us and took from us all we had. Now there were in our caravan 1,000 loaded mules. I had only one pound left which was hidden in the earth. Then we traveled from that city to Ramathie, but those who were with me began to beat me, saying, 'You are the cause of this all.' So I fled from that city and traveled twenty-three days afoot, wandering from town to town, till I came to Aleppo at last, and from here I went to Humus. When the people of Humus heard about me they determined to kill me, but I fled to Zaitoun, and from there to Haifa, but the report concerning me was spread about on all sides. It happened that as I kneeled down to pray to God that a Moslem man came upon me, who said, 'Come to my house with me.' Then he said, 'Most welcome, brother.' 'Why do you call me brother,' said I, 'since I do not even know you?' 'I heard about you before,' was his answer, 'but now, praise the Lord, I see you, for I also am a believer in the Christian religion. Welcome to my house.' So I went with him, and there I remained almost a year.

"But one day when we were praying the local governor came upon us and asked, 'What kind of prayer is that which you are praying? Are you a Mohammedan or not?' I told him that I was a Christian. 'From what city are you?' was his next question. 'From the city of Medina, the enlightened,' said I. 'There are absolutely no Christians living in Medina,' said he. 'True,' said I, 'but I have become a follower of the Christian religion,' and then I noticed that his face became flushed with anger. Then I went outside the city and called the man with whom I was staying to tell him not to fear. I now traveled to Damascus, and from there to Medina, where I went to our house.

"When my father saw that I did not say my (Moslem) prayers, he said, 'Why do you not say your prayers?' I told him that I had prayed early in the morning. He said, 'I did not see you pray, although I have watched you for a long time since. Arise, say your prayer and continue to read the Koran. I think that your property or the extent of your affairs have kept your mind busy.' 'Neither property nor my affairs have kept me busy,' said I, 'but eternal life occupies my attention. And would that you too, O my father, shared in that with me so that you might be saved from destruction and the fire of hell.' 'Show me the way,' said he. 'Do you believe?' said I. 'What faith?' he asked. 'Faith in Jesus Christ,' I said. 'Are you a Moslem or a Christian?' he asked. 'A Christian,' I said, 'for God has anointed me on the cross.' Then he took me by the hand and went with me to the judge of Moslem law and said to him, 'Your honor, this fellow goes on a business trip every year. He is gone six months and then returns to us, but this time he went on a trip and came back an apostate.' So the judge questioned me concerning this. I answered quickly, 'I am not an apostate, but a believer in Christ Jesus.' Then they scourged

me and condemned me to be hanged. They set me upon a donkey painted with black, yellow and red colors, and so rode me through the entire city.

"After this they said, 'To-day is Friday. The hanging of Sayyed Mohammed Ali is omitted at present'; and then they took me to my house. My wife, my children, my slave-woman and my slave detested me, but I did not oppose them save by prayer. Finally my mother gave me ten pounds, saying, 'O my son, go under God's protection. We will meet the day of meeting.' I went to the depot and boarded the train for Syria, and so worked my way from city to city till I reached Jerusalemi. Here a severe persecution broke out against me so that I fled to Gaza, but there they wanted to poison me. So I fled to Jaffa, from where I went to Port Said, and thence to Balbeis. I prayed that I might see you, O dear father, and the Saviour Jesus brought me to the honorable brother, Porter. I thank the Lord for this because he has fulfilled his promise. God willing, I will preach the Gospel ere long and all my life after.

"May your honor be in good health,

"Your son,

"HANNA ABDL MESSIAH."

NOTE.—Before his conversion this man's name was Mohammed Sayyed, the word "Sayyed" indicating that he was a descendant of Mohammed. His new name, Abdel Messiah, means servant, or slave, of Christ.

The Arabian Mission and the War in Mesopotamia

The more recent eastward developments of the European War, involving the extension of hostilities in Mesopotamia and the capture of Bagdad by the British Expeditionary Force with its base at Basrah, have brought our Arabian missionaries into further personal relations with war conditions.

It will be remembered that immediately on the outbreak of hostilities between the Turkish and British forces in November, 1914, the Lansing Memorial Hospital at Basrah cared for the Turkish wounded under the auspices of the Red Crescent Society. Upon the occupation of Basrah by the British Expeditionary Forces the Hospital continued to care for the wounded, but the auspices were transferred to the Red Cross Society. During these intervening months and years the Hospital and its medical staff has continued to render large service in the care of the wounded, especially of the Turkish wounded, as they were brought in after sanguinary conflicts between the Turkish and British Forces along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. It was while Dr. and Mrs. Bennett were rendering large service in this direction that they both fell ill of typhus fever contracted from Turkish wounded soldiers brought to the Hospital and that Mrs. Bennett's life became a sacrifice to her professional and missionary devotion.

With the recovery of Kut-el-Amara by the British Forces and the subsequent capture of Bagdad, conditions have been revealed that have brought the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief into the field.

The reports that have reached this Committee indicate that the Armenian refugees have been sent in great numbers and in terrible destitution down both the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and there have been further reports that a large number of these refugees are in Bagdad and vicinity. The Armenian Relief Committee naturally feels that the relief made possible by the funds which have been entrusted to them should be extended to these Armenians in the neighborhood of Bagdad. In order to determine the extent and need of the suffering it is essential to send reliable investigators to Bagdad at once to make inquiry and report and to receive funds for affording the necessary relief.

As is probably well known, the missionaries of the American and Presbyterian Boards in Turkey and in Syria have been carrying out the relief measures in those areas of great Armenian persecution. The Armenian Committee, realizing that the only approach to Bagdad is through the Persian Gulf and that the missionaries of our own Arabian Mission are the only ones to whom they can now turn for this investigation and assistance, have called upon the Trustees of the Arabian Mission to designate two of our missionaries in Arabia to proceed at once to Bagdad and administer aid to Christian refugees and cable full reports regarding conditions and immediate needs.

Although our Mission force is somewhat depleted in Basrah, especially the medical staff, the Trustees have felt the urgency and immediacy of this call and have therefore designated two of the medical missionaries now connected with our stations at Kuweit and Basrah, in the northern part of the Gulf, to undertake this relief commission. These are Dr. C. S. G. Mylrea of Kuweit and Dr. E. E. Lavy of Basrah. Dr. Mylrea has had experience in Armenian relief work, as he was engaged in this service in Syria prior to his entrance upon medical missionary work. Dr. Lavy is a member of the Church Missionary Society's Mission at Bagdad. He was obliged to leave Bagdad on the outbreak of hostilities and has been rendering voluntary service at Basrah during recent months, being in charge of the Lansing Memorial Hospital. Both Dr. Mylrea and Dr. Lavy are British subjects and will therefore probably meet with less difficulty in proceeding north through the military barriers necessarily existing. A cablegram has been sent to them by the Trustees authorizing their immediate departure for Bagdad and their undertaking of this administration of relief to the Christian refugees along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and in the vicinity of Bagdad. Considerable sums of money will be placed at their disposal from the funds of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, of which Dr. James L. Barton, the Senior Secretary of the American Board, is the Chairman and the Foreign Secretary of our Board a member.

Apart from the character of the service which these missionaries will render and which brings its own justification and reward, there will inevitably be much advantage from the presence of the representatives of the Arabian Mission in the Mesopotamian Valley, as this is the region in which they look for large opportunities for the extension of their work among

the Arabs. The occupancy of this territory by an enlightened and Christian government will make a very great difference in the opportunities which our missionaries will have for the extension of their work beyond the port cities.

Information has recently reached the Trustees that the great Nejd Chief, Bin Saud, has recently visited Kuweit and that he, together with the Sheikhs of Kuweit and Mohammerah, the three great Chiefs of the whole northeast region of Arabia, has shown our missionaries the great courtesy and confidence of a formal call upon them at their own residence. Dr. Mylrea was the recipient of this call. The Chief Bin Saud has his capital, so far as a wandering Arab Sheikh can be said to have any permanent abiding place, at Riadh, and it was he whose alliance with the Shereef of Mecca led recently to the expulsion of the Turkish Forces from the neighborhood of Mecca. These are certainly indications pointing to the very extensive opening of the territory north of Basrah and west of Kuweit and Bahrein for which our missionaries have been so long and so patiently and so eagerly waiting.

Missionary Personalia

The Rev. G. J. Pennings, who has been obliged to remain in this country beyond the period of his furlough under medical advice, has now so far recovered as to be able to plan for his return to Arabia this fall.

Rev. and Mrs. G. D. Van Peursem returned to this country on their regular furlough in April, 1916. They are now planning to go back to the field this fall.

Miss J. A. Scardefield has been spending her furlough with members of her family at Mount Vernon, N. Y. She expects to start back to the Persian Gulf in August or September this year.

Mr. H. A. Bilkert, who some time ago received his appointment to the Arabian Mission, expects, together with Miss A. M. Monteith, his fiancée, to go out to Arabia this year. Mr. Bilkert has recently passed through a sorrowful experience in the death of his father.

Miss Mary C. Van Pelt, at present connected with the Kentucky College for Women, has also received the appointment of the Trustees of the Arabian Mission to service as a trained nurse, probably in connection with the Lansing Memorial Hospital at Basrah, where she will succeed Miss Holzhauser, who has returned and retired from service in accordance with the terms of her appointment.

Rev. F. J. Barny, Rev. and Mrs. John Van Ess, and Dr. Van Vlack are expected to arrive in this country on their furloughs some time this spring.

Arabia Seeks Recognition

The establishment of the new Kingdom of Arabia, with Grand Shereef Hussein Ben Ali as monarch and Mecca as the capital, was reported to the State Department to-day, November 11th, in an undated telegram from Mecca signed by Shereef Abdullah, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Arab people, Abdullah said, would henceforth be active members of the society of nations, and confidently looked forward to recognition by the United States. The new kingdom resulted, he said, from an unanimous meeting of the notables and citizens of the country, who definitely threw off the yoke of the Committee of Union and Progress at Constantinople.

The State Department knows nothing of the new Foreign Minister and little of the circumstances surrounding the proclamation of the kingdom, and does not know how to reach him owing to the absence of any consular or diplomatic representative in Arabia. Investigation into the situation, however, may be possible through British or French channels.

The request for recognition is expected to be met in much the same way as other governmental changes due to the war. In Egypt, when the new Khediviate was established in December, 1914, consular officers were instructed to recognize the new officials as *de facto*. With respect to the new Government of Poland, the United States will postpone final action until peace is established.

Arabia has been seething since spring, when the Shereef revolted and drove the Turkish garrison out of Mecca. No Turkish force is known to have entered Arabia since then, and it is supposed here to have been practically autonomous. The secession of all Arabia with the Holy City of Mecca, the formal and final independence of Egypt under a separate Khediviate with extensive religious powers, the Russian conquest of rich sections of Armenia, and the co-operation of Indian and French Mohammedans in allied armies are expected by students of Near Eastern questions to result in a marked impairment of Turkish power.—*New York Times*.

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